



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager

DATE: September 14, 2015

SUBJECT: City of Austin Participation in National Science Foundation Grant for US Ignite

This afternoon, US Ignite announced that it has been awarded a \$6 million from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to build a “living lab of testbeds” for smart gigabit applications in 15 communities around the country. I am pleased to inform you that Austin TX will be part of the Smart Gigabit Communities project to connect cities through a high-speed network backbone. The other cities participating in the project are Burlington, VT; Chattanooga, TN; Cleveland, OH; Flint, MI; Kansas City, KS & MO; Madison, WI; the North Carolina Next Generation Network; Richardson, TX; Utah Wasatch Front cities including Salt Lake City and Provo, UT; Lafayette, LA; and Urbana-Champaign, IL.

US Ignite is an independent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit, that has formed partnerships with leading network operators, premier research and educational networks, top equipment manufacturers, federal agencies, telecommunications companies, cities investing in gigabit networks, innovative nonprofits, foundations, entrepreneurs and developers. US Ignite fosters the creation of next-generation Internet applications that provide transformative public benefit and shares best practices and resources among its partners.

Being included in this national grant will allow Austin to work with other US Ignite communities and will strengthen Austin’s entrepreneurial ecosystem by developing, sharing, and scaling next-generation applications driven by a nation-wide, ultra-high speed network connecting us to other cities and universities. The technical architecture will allow us to develop Austin’s own big data applications and apply those applications developed in other communities that deal with the national priorities of clean energy, energy management, transportation, emergency preparedness and public safety and workforce development and education.

Staff’s next steps include developing the process for appointing members to a broad-based steering committee/working group to help launch the gigabit infrastructure and to start developing new and transformative next generation web applications that can use this Smart Gigabit Community infrastructure.

cc: Marc A. Ott, City Manager

Assistant City Managers

Chief of Staff

Rondella Hawkins, Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs Officer